

## [Indian Atrocities]

1

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Page 1 [?]

INDIAN ATROCITIES AND WILD FRONTIER OF 1861-65 RECALLED BY WICHITAN,  
Copied from Wichita Daily Times, Sept. 18, 1938.

Tales of Indian atrocities, tales to stiffen the nape of your neck, are rarely told of Wichita County, but just such wild frontier experiences are the earliest childhood memories of Mrs. M. E. Quisenberry, 1009 Eighth.

Wichita, Clay and Montague counties from 1861 to 1865 were strategic outpost against Indian attacks on the unprotected settlements—unprotected because the fighting men were enlisted in the great civil struggle.

“There were seven families of us in Wichita County at the close of the Civil War at a camp called Red River Station, “Mrs. Quisenberry said. “The station, about half a mile from the river, was immediately abandoned, and the whole settlement moved into the more civilized territory of Collin county.

“My father, William Gabriel, and six other soldiers formed the river camp. Then there were other small companies in Montague and Clay,” she continued. “The names of the others are kind of vague. There were Mr. Sparks, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Roberts and Mack Bowen.”

Mack Bowen's name comes easily to her, because the horror of his death has never left her.

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"Mr. Bowen was riding back to the station after scouting around when a part of Indians sighted him," she said. "They spread out and headed him off. He whipped up his horse to a gallop, but 2 they knew what they were doing. They crowded him, horse and all, off a 30-foot bluff.

"The fall didn't kill him, so the savages shot him with 27 arrows and musket balls," she continued. "They slid off their horses and down the banks to scalp him. When my father and the others found him, they been alive even after he'd been scalped, by the bloody grass he clutched in his hands he'd pulled up the grass in his agony and rubbed it across his head."

After that, the soldiers tried another treaty with the Inians. During a peace Pow-wow, one of the soldiers spotted the new suit of clothes Bowen's wife had made for him and he'd worn on the day of his death. The brave who wore Bowen's clothes completed the costume with Bowen's scalp.

"The Indians would promise to be good, but come first full moon when it was light, and they'd sneak into camp and steal the soldier's horses and cattle," she said.

"Shortly after Bowen's death, a soldier named Snodgrass was killed by the Indians.

"I never will forget that because his wife rolled around in the yard and yelled and tore her hair out, " Mrs. Quisenberry said. "She was real young and couldn't stand this country."

That is hardly surprising when you hear Mrs. Quisenberry's description. "There was plenty of wild game. The soldiers' families had their cows, and that meant plenty of milk and butter. But bread was a luxury. The nearest flour mill was in Collin county. 3 "And when you went from here to Collin county by ox team, you had a right smart trip on your hands, "she declared.

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She remembers distinctly that there were all kinds of wild "Varmints," turkeys, buffalo and wild cattle. Often the soldiers would catch the wild calves and turn them into pens with their own stock.

Several times the soldiers tried to build an earthen rampart behind which the women could barricade themselves when the men were out scouting. The project was never completed.

"Some farmer probably came across that short earth wall about 10 years later and wondered if some Indian had tried to build a dirt house." she said.

Mrs. Quisenberry returned to Wichita county last year making her home with her daughter, Mrs. Katherine Saving, 1009 Eighth. Since 1865 she had lived in Collin and Cook counties.

"It was funny, but as long as we lived in this county with the excitement and all I wasn't afraid," she smiled. "But after we moved to the safety of Collin county, the sight of a man in a spotted beef-hide shirt the Indians used spotted beef hides for shields used to send me screaming to the farm house."